

5 Goya's Pharmacy¹

CAPRICES, VINEGARS AND OTHER SALTS ('STRONG WATERS' – FIRST CONJECTURE)

Goya's *Caprichos* or *Caprices* (illus. 13, 59, 62) were put up for sale on 6 February 1799 in a shop that sold alcohol and perfume in the centre of Madrid, near the Puerta del Sol, at 1, calle del Desengaño (illus. 89, 90). The choice of this shop is intriguing since prints were usually sold through bookshops on a subscription basis following advertising campaigns.² To get a sense of what was usually on sale in this particular drug-store, all we need do is look through the newspapers of the time.³ For example:

Desengaño Street, on the corner of Vallesta Street, near the barracks of the Invalides, has just taken delivery of the following products from France: a variety of different-flavoured lozenges for the mouth called sweets, in specially designed boxes with one or more compartments; an assortment of vinegars to remove stains from the face and for cleaning the teeth; another variety called 'flora' to beautify the face; phials of vinegar called 'the four thieves' at 14 reales, very useful when it comes to preventing all manner of epidemics and infections; and pots of rouge and white powder at 15 reales. Very fine powder from Paris for the face and arms: very attractive little cases and cardboard boxes with different pieces of glass with subtly changing colours to suit all tastes; an assortment of pots of very fine ointments in a range of fragrances; packets of different scented powders.⁴

Or:

. . . packets of fine musk- or violet-scented powder, different vinegars for the teeth, different opiates – liquid, fine, ultra-fine and in powder, small and very pleasantly perfumed sachets to carry around, plain or embroidered, an

DIARIO DE MADRID

DEL MIERCOLES 6 DE FEBRERO DE 1799.

Santa Dorotea Virgen. = Q. H. en la Iglesia de San Felipe Neri.

Observacio. meteorolog. de ayer.			Afecciones astronomicas de hoy.	
Especi.	Termom.	Barometro.	Atmosfera.	El 30 de la Luna. Sale
7 de la m.	3 s. o.	25 p. 48 l.	O. y Nub.	el sol á las 7 y 59 m.
12 del d.	3 1/2 s. o.	25 p. 84 l.	O. y Nub.	de la m. y se pone á las
5 de la t.	3 s. o.	25 p. 84 l.	O. y Nub.	5 y un m. de la tard.

Coleccion de estampas de asuntos caprichosos, inventadas y grabadas al agua fuerte, por Don Francisco Goya. Persuadido el autor de que la censura de los errores y vicios humanos (aunque parece peculiar de la elocuencia y la poesia) puede tambien ser objeto de la pintura: ha escogido como asuntos proporcionados para su obra, entre la multitud de extravagancias y desazucos que son comunes en toda sociedad civil, y entre las preocupaciones y omisiones vulgares, autorizadas por la costumbre, la ignorancia ó el interes, aquellos que han creido mas aptos á suministrar materia para el ridiculo, y exercitar al mismo tiempo la fantasia del artífice.

Como la mayor parte de los objetos que en esta obra se representan son ideales, no será temeridad creer que sus defectos hallarán, tal vez, mucha disculpa entre los inteligentes: considerando que el autor, si ha seguido los ejemplos de otro, ni ha podido copiar una poca de la naturaleza. Y si el imitador es tan difícil, como admirable quando se logra; no dexará de merecer alguna estimacion el que apartándose enteramente de ella, ha tenido que exponer á los ojos foráneos y actitudes que solo han existido hasta ahora en la mente humana, obscurecida y confusa por la falta de ilustracion ó acalorada con el desenfreno de las pasiones.

Sería suponer demasiada ignorancia en las bellas artes el advertir al público, que en ninguna de las composiciones que forman esta coleccion se ha propuesto el autor, para radicalizar los defectos portadores á uno u otro individuo; que seria en verdad, extrachar de un solo hombre al talento y equivocarse los medios de que se valen las artes de imitacion para producir obras perfectas.

150

La pintura (como la poesia) escoge en lo universal lo que juega mas á proposito para sus fines: reune en un solo personaje fantastico, circunstancias y caracteres que la naturaleza presenta repartidos en muchos, y de esta combinacion, ingeniosamente dispuesta, resulta aquella feliz imitacion, por la qual adquiere un buen artífice el titulo de inventor y no de copiante servil.

Se vende en la calle del Desengaño n.º 1 tienda de perfumes y liqores, pagando por cada coleccion de 480 estampas 320 rs. vn.

89 Advertisement
announcing the sale
of Goya's *Caprichos*
in the *Diario de*
Madrid, 6 February
1799.

assortment of black tablets used to polish shoes and boots, others in the shape of a ball to soften and blacken boots, and a shiny, extremely fine liquid much appreciated by different gentlemen for it is superior to the mixed and invented substances because of their quality and their ease of use, moreover a collection of elegant fans has arrived . . .⁵

Eyewitness accounts of the period help complete the picture. The shop in calle del Desengaño must have resembled the trinket shop portrayed in Luis Paret y Alcazar's famous painting (illus. 91)⁶ and the apothecary in one of Goya's own *Caprichos* (illus. 92).

Given that the sale of the *Caprichos* in such a place and such



91 Luis Paret y Alcazar, *The Trinket Shop*, 1722, oil on wood.

single and abrupt phrase: *for sale* (*se vende*).

We shall examine the way in which the marriage between 'merchandise' and 'imagination' is brought about in the case of the *Caprichos*. We shall explore the place of the merchandise-image in the creator/public relationship highlighted by the advertisement. We shall also endeavour to see just how closely the *creator/public* binomial tallies with that of the *seller/buyer*. Finally, we shall endeavour to ascertain to what extent the advertisement can be considered to be a *mise-en-scène* of its own dual function (the first being the sale of actual goods, the second being the sale of symbolic goods).

We have focused our research on the double question of 'merchandise'. The first question is 'Who sells to whom?'; the second is 'What is being sold?' Two further questions, apparently marginal, are: 'Where does one sell?' and 'When does one sell?' It is only by tackling all these questions that we can uncover the ramifications of the advertisement, and the great originality of the print series being advertised.

Our objective is not the sociology of the artistic product, but its interpretation. We think that this is an important point of departure, useful for such an interpretation, namely Jacques Derrida's definition of a 'text':

92 Goya, *Capricho*
33: *At the Count*
Palatine, 1797–8,
etching and
aquatint.



A text is only a text if at first glance it hides from the first to come along, the laws of its composition and the rules of its game. In fact a text always remains imperceptible. Laws and rules cannot take refuge in the inaccessibility of a secret, they simply never give themselves up, neither to the present, nor to anything that we could strictly call perception.

And again: 'The concealment of the texture may take centuries to undo its fabric. The fabric enveloping the fabric.

Centuries to undo the fabric. Thus reconstituting it as an organism.’¹⁰ The experiment we are offering the reader is that of reconstituting the texture of a text. That the text is a simple advertisement does not simplify things; on the contrary. We find ourselves at the dawn of publicity, and two of its characteristics – still valid in our consumer society – are already evident. As with all publicity material, the text in question contains an obvious message and a secret one. In the case of the commercialization of symbolic goods, the first message is more complex than usual. Indeed, the advertisement in the *Diario de Madrid*, having named the object for sale (the ‘collection of prints’ / ‘by Goya’) launches unusually into a dissertation on the intentions of the ‘author’ (*el autor*), which are said to lie in the ‘censure of human errors and vices’. The text goes on to specify that it is society that has provided the themes to the ‘artificer’s fancy’ (*la fantasía del artefice*) as well as ‘the matter for ridicule’ (*materia para el ridículo*). In the second paragraph this assertion is partly amended or at least qualified. The ‘author’ is named yet again, this time in order to draw attention to a need for a pact with the ‘connoisseurs’ (*los inteligentes*). The latter must understand the innovative nature of an approach that ‘stands aloof from’ nature, since the artist’s work involves the visualization (‘putting before the eyes’, *exponer a los ojos*) of images, which until then had remained ‘obscured and confused’ (*obscurcida y confusa*) due to the ‘lack of education’, or excited due to the ‘unruliness of passions’. In this way, the wording of the advertisement introduces a direct allusion to the need for double ‘lighting’: for bringing into the light (or ‘publishing’) what was hidden, for clarifying what was unclear (‘*obscur*’).

This is probably why the third paragraph widens the pact with the ‘author’ (*el autor* appears at this point for the third and last time) by naming as its partner not an élite (*los inteligentes*) but the public (*el público*). The advertisement insists on giving the latter a short lesson in aesthetics (whilst asking to be forgiven for assuming the public to be ‘ignorant’). The public must not expect to see in the ‘collection of prints’ an attack *ad personam*. It must understand that perfect works (*obras perfectas*) have as their object the general, not the particular. The advertisement closes by specifying the address at which the 80 prints can be acquired and their price (320 *reales*).

If experts have found traces of neo-classical aesthetics on

the level of the advertisement's direct message¹¹ (for which responsibility must fall to Goya's advisers, Moratin or Jovellanos, for example), on the level of the expression, we have found intentions coming from the post-Baroque culture of conceptism – a culture that was familiar with linguistic games and enigmatic images. This can be glimpsed in the statement that this exceptional product – a collection of etched prints – is aimed primarily at an exceptional viewer/reader, someone capable of understanding their most original features. Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to identify this ideal reader. When Goya first alluded to an élitist public of 'connoisseurs', he was placing himself (no matter whether deliberately or not) in the furrow ploughed by Baltasar Gracián (1601–58), his famous Aragon compatriot, who, a century earlier, had described in several key texts the prototype of the 'good listener' or 'judicious and shrewd man':

He controls objects, and is never controlled by them. The sounding lead goes unrestrained right to the bottom of the deepest depth, he understands perfectly how to anatomize people's talents; he need only see a man to know him fully and completely; he deciphers all his innermost secrets of the heart; he is quick to understand, sharp when it comes to censure, judicious when it comes to drawing conclusions; he discovers everything, notices everything, understands everything.¹²

This ideal portrait to which any interpreter should aspire whilst remaining conscious that he will never achieve it completely, shows us Goya's 'awaiting horizon'.¹³ The 'intelligent person/connoisseur' or 'good listener' (*buen entendedor*)¹⁴ will not necessarily be – and this is important – a reader/interpreter of texts, but a decoder of behaviour and decipherer of symbolic systems. He or she will therefore be the most favourite receptor, on the one hand, of the apparently innocuous advertisement published in the *Diario de Madrid* and, on the other, of the complexity of the product to which it refers. In other words, the viewer and most favoured receptor of the *Caprichos*. To get to the heart of the advertisement and enjoy the complexity of the *Caprichos*, we shall have to position ourselves in this person's shadow. If our research is conclusive, the credit should go to him or her. Any errors will of course be due to our own shortcomings and limitations.

The first account of the *Caprichos* to appear in Goya's lifetime, in 1811 (probably during a second sale), confirms the complexity of their reception:

The ordinary run of people who look at them have been of the belief that they represented only the fancies of their author, but the knowledgeable soon realised that they all embraced a certain mystery. Indeed, this collection, comprising eighty prints with more than 400 figures of every kind, is nothing but a book of instruction consisting of eighty engraved moral poems, or a satirical treatise on eighty of those vices and prejudices that most afflict society. From the vices of the most distinguished classes to those of the people of low life, all are nicely ridiculed in this singular work. Misers, lechers, blustering cowards, ignorant physicians, mad old women, the vain and the idle, the old men who ape boys, prostitutes, hypocrites, in fact every kind of stupid, lazy, and roguish person finds himself so sagaciously portrayed that the prints offer much food for meditation. At the same time the subtle conceits hidden in each satire are divined and everyone makes applications, more or less fitting, in his own way and according to his own field of knowledge.¹⁵

This is a most eloquent text, especially as it expresses, twelve years on and much more clearly, the basic pact that was already discernible in the *Diario de Madrid* advertisement. It underlines the élitist nature of the recipient, making a clear distinction between 'the ordinary run of people' and 'the knowledgeable', and it is careful to describe the moral nature of the product. But the fundamental question concerning the latter is far from having been exhausted.

What, in the final analysis, was the 'author' selling to 'the knowledgeable'? The most satisfactory answer to this question – that of the 'good listener' – must for the sake of clarity, take account of the double quality of the object on sale. Goya's ludic intention (only discernible to the 'connoisseur') was, we believe, to present the *Caprichos* as marketable, and marketed, products (like perfumes, vinegars and miracle salts) and also as 'symbolic goods'. In other words as a product whose metaphorical focus prevailed over its reality as an object. If the *Caprichos* and the publicity notice advertising their sale were primarily destined for an ideal 'good listener' of conceptist

descent, then he or she should have been capable of making the connection between 'object' and 'symbol', thus reaching the conclusion that the prints Goya was selling through the calle del Desengaño pharmacy were 'strong waters' of exceptional quality because of their ludic *pluri-semanticism*.

This becomes even more apparent if we read an excerpt from one of the best-known treatises on the methods used in eighteenth-century etching and a page of the first monograph devoted to the Spanish painter.

Here is the excerpt from the treatise entitled *Secrets concernant les Arts et Métiers* (1786):

You will need to have a well-polished and very clean plate; you heat it on the fire and cover it with dry or liquid varnish, for they are available in both. Then you must blacken this varnish by means of a lighted candle, over which you place the varnished side of the plate. Once this is done, all you need do is copy your drawing onto this plate; which is a much simpler process than engraving. (. . .) It is not enough for the Etcher just to work with the point of his needle or stall, over the whole area of his work, with the strength and gentleness required to bring out the distant and nearest parts. He must also be careful, when it comes to putting the strong water on the plate that it does not eat into the plate equally everywhere; this is done with a mixture of oil and candle soot. (. . .) The strong water, made up of verdegris, vinegar, ordinary salt, sal ammoniac and vitriol, is used to etch the copper by pouring it onto the plates coated with soft or hard varnish, and then exposed according to the drawing you want to etch. When it comes to the refiner's strong water, known as white water, that is only used on soft varnish and it is not poured like the first, which is green water; instead you place the plate flat on a table and after having lined it with wax, you cover it with this white water diluted more or less with ordinary water [illus. 93].¹⁶

The second quotation comes from Yriarte's monograph entitled *Goya* (1867):

Goya's method is no easy matter. He needed a method that was subtle, biting, reliable, and that would not fade; a personal method that demanded no translator and that responded well to thought. He wanted his mockery to



become immortal, and so he used strong water, which to him was indelible through the very nature of the material, and which, multiplying itself into infinity, also multiplied the blows he struck. (. . .) Goya is by no means misunderstood; all those who are involved in art glorify him, and his works are indelibly etched in their memories, but this must be extended further; for the study of the arts it is necessary for his name to become very popular, that a new class of readers should know who this great artist is, and what a thinker there is beneath this enthusiastic aquafortist. (. . .) There is a passionate satirist, who attacks everything and everyone, always ready to bite, but a bite that is poisoned. Philosophy, history, religion, decrees, censures, institutions and constraints, he challenges everything. (. . .) Goya is above all terrible and his strong water is abundant.¹⁷

The whole page, especially this last sentence, written in the still vital spirit of the conceptist 'good listener', shows to what extent 'the iconology of strong waters'¹⁸ was very much part of the initial reaction to Goya's *Caprices*.

DREAMS, CAPRICES, HUMOURS ('STRONG WATERS' – SECOND CONJECTURE)

The analysis of the different versions of the image Goya prepared for the frontispiece of his collection of prints is one of the *topoi* of Goya-esque exegesis. In order to advance our understanding of the series within the context of the commercial market, we need to examine it here.

We know of three versions of this image: two of them must have introduced the old series entitled *Dreams* (illus. 72, 73), which contained only 72 etchings. The third version (illus. 98) was integrated into the final series as number 43. The earlier title was abandoned without giving any clear indication of what the new one should be (the title of *Los Caprichos* was established quite quickly and somewhat insistently).

If we compare the first version (illus. 72) with the title page of the 1699 edition of Quevedo's *Dreams* (illus. 94) (the probable but not the only source of inspiration), it is easy to spot the similarities as well as the differences.¹⁹ The position of the dreamer has been changed, as has the means of expression depicted (ink and paper in Quevedo's image; engraved plate in



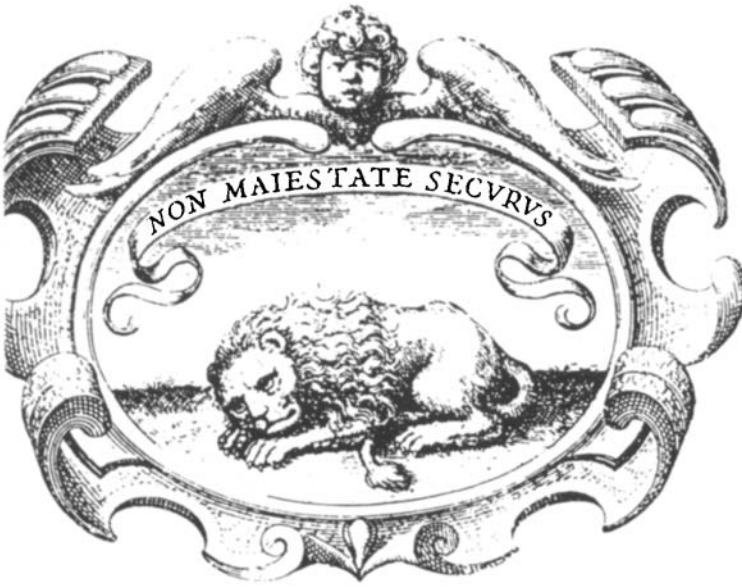
94 Frontispiece of Francisco de Quevedo, *Obras*, vol. 1 (Antwerp, 1699).

Goya's). Both images contain books, but they are more numerous and tidier in the Quevedo, whereas in the Goya they are used to support the etched plate in the foreground. The most significant difference lies in the thematization of the dream. This is revealed indirectly through the suggestion of a smile on the face of the sleeping poet, whereas in the Goya it is manifested as an explosion of fantasies that physically invade the space. The personal nature of the dreams is reinforced by the fact that the dreamlike world is placed level with the dreamer's head. It is as though, because of a change made to the Quevedo frontispiece, the contents of the dream could no longer be manifested in a fleeting smile, but instead escaped into the space, in a kind of visualization of the 'transparent mind'.²⁰ This dreamlike world is a confused mixture of disturbing, and for the most part nocturnal, animals and a series of multiple projections of the same face, that of Goya. This first version anticipates one of the major characteristics of the series, which is the split, indeed the multiple self-projection, to which we shall return.

In the second version (illus. 73), the innovations are important. On the one hand, there are fewer animals but, on the other, they are more complicated: the huge bat has been made larger than life and a lynx with enormous staring eyes (erased in the first version) is happily ensconced in the bottom right-

hand corner. Important changes have also been made to some of the details of the dreamer's body language. In the first version, his hands are joined, his fingers entwined together, and a long lock of hair falls onto the copper plate. In the second version, the lock is no longer there, while the copper plate and the arms have changed position. Further examination reveals that the dreamer himself has a different hairstyle, indeed that his head is a different shape. In the first drawing (illus. 72) it is not so very different from that seen in Goya's wash self-portrait dating from the same period (illus. 36). The tumbling mane of the frontispiece should probably be placed within the context of an accentuation of the leonine symbolism to be found in the New York drawing that we have already studied (see Chapter 2). Another element probably associated with it is the representation of the dreamer's eye, made prominent in the frontispiece through a section of the brow and face remaining uncovered (illus. 96). There is no doubt that Goya worked at these details, but he did so, as it were, in a regressive way. In the second frontispiece (illus. 73) and in the final etching (illus. 98) the head has sunk lower into the dreamer's crossed arms and his left eye, so conspicuous in the first version, can no longer be seen. Moreover the lynx with its hypnotic gaze has taken over the leonine characteristics. This comparison sheds some light on Goya's experimentation and explorations. In the first version he played with the lion's inherent ability to sleep with his eyes open, which was a real *topos* in bestiaries and books of moral emblems. For example, Diego de Saavedra Fajardo's *Empresas politicas* (1640) contains an *imago* (illus. 95) that Goya could skilfully have used for his frontispiece. The accompanying text specifies that: '... the lion is unequivocally acknowledged to be the king of the animals. He sleeps little, and when he does it is with his eyes open. (...) This is part of his shrewdness and cunning.'²¹

This emblem has been combined with another motif that was very much part of conceptist culture, that of the split or 'double vision' (*la vista duplicada*) resulting in 'inner sight' (or 'insight') and 'outer sight'.²² If in the first frontispiece (illus. 72, 96) the leonine dreamer has one eye hidden by his arms and the other quite visible, things are different in the second frontispiece (illus. 73) and in the final etching (illus. 98). What we are seeing is a kind of polarization between the 'inner sight' of the dreamer whose eyes are not completely hidden,



and the thematization, indeed glorification, of the lynx's 'outer' gaze.

The lynx's sight is an ancient symbolic motif, which was fully codified in Valeriano Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica* (1602)²³ and which became wholly integrated, in Gracián, with the attributes of the 'good listener'.²⁴ In Goya's second frontispiece, therefore, while the 'author sleeps', his inner sight is at work and the sharp sight of the good listener, the spectator's counterpart, keeps watch.

It is possible that the enigmatic New York self-portrait (illus. 36) contained the early seeds of an idea which was later to develop into polarization. There is not much difference between the size of this drawing and the first frontispiece but the leonine self-portrait should still be viewed as a unique and anticipatory experiment. The wide-open eyes see and do not see, look and do not look, peer into the distance and, at the same time and with the same intensity, turn inwards.

But the comparison between the first and second frontispieces (illus. 72, 73) can and must go very much further. What is so striking is that in the second frontispiece the split within the dreaming person is no longer the dominant theme and the multiple faces have disappeared. The whole of an important section (top left) has been left blank. Several attempts have been made to explain this phenomenon. Werner



Hofmann suggested that this quarter circle might be connected to the ancient *rotae* through which the medieval system of liberal arts was conceived.²⁵ Eleanor Sayre, for her part, thought it might have been influenced by one of Saavedra Fajardo's *empresas* that contained a whole moral dissertation on the dialectical relationship between the light of truth and the darkness of lies. It is difficult to choose just one of these interpretations. Instead, we would like to draw attention to what is probably the oldest commentary, an unusual one since it does not come to us in discursive but in figurative form. This is the canvas depicting an *Allegory of the Night* by Zacarias González Velásquez (1763–1834), an artist originally from Aragon who worked in Madrid in circles close to Goya's (illus. 97).²⁶ There is very little doubt that this painter (who fraternized with Goya and whose brother, the architect Isidro, Goya painted) conducted a dialectic with the drawings of the master, just as there is also very little doubt that his interpretation quite blatantly favoured the classicizing allegories that Goya had long since distanced himself from. In González's work, the nightmarish atmosphere has been replaced by intense moonlight. The figure of the dreamer, opium poppy in hand, who combines elements from Goya's first two frontispieces, has become a winged spirit (probably Hypnos himself). Instead of the bat and the owl, González has populated his night with cherubs. The great source of light within the painting is the lunar disk against which stands the silhou-



97 Zacarias
González
Velásquez, *Allegory
of the Night*, after
1800, oil on canvas
mounted on a wall.

ette of Selene/Diane. It is difficult to establish with any accuracy the precise route that Gonzáles took to reach this classification of Goya's invention, but what strikes us as important is the fact that its figurative interpretation opens up the possibility of a reverse reading of the 1797 frontispiece as a *mise-en-scène* of a lunar dream.

The theme of the moon's influence on the human imagination is extremely ancient and is found as much in the classical tradition as in popular beliefs.²⁷ This would not be the first, nor the last time, that Goya was to show himself as sensitive to it.²⁸ What is important, however, is not that he adopted it here but that he eventually abandoned it. The final version (*Capricho* 43, illus. 98) once again appears to be the fruit of a situational reversal. The dreamer's head has sunk into his crossed arms, and the moonlight has been replaced by the darkest of darks.

Whether or not this is accepted, one thing is for certain. The large quarter circle that fills the upper left-hand corner of the 1797 version (illus. 73) is neither an accident nor the consequence of the image's 'unfinished state'. On the contrary, this drawing, which bears traces of copper and which had therefore been used as an etched impression that no longer exists, shows that a lot of thought was given as to its function as an endpaper to a series of images. With its double frame, its centre has been reserved for the image and its margins for the text(s). In the upper part we can read the title: *Sueño 1^o/1st Dream*. In the lower part we have what is a stage direction:

The artist dreaming.

His only purpose is to banish harmful, vulgar beliefs, and to perpetuate in this work of caprices the solid testimony of truth.

A final caption can be found within the actual pictorial field, on the plinth on which the dreamer rests his head:

1st dream.
Univer
sal Language. Drawn
and Etched by F.co de Goya.
Year 1797

This second version is a very good and extremely important example of the 'paratextual' phenomenon.²⁹ Title, date and





98 Goya, *Capricho 43: The Sleep of Reason Brings forth Monsters*, 1797–8, etching and aquatint.

99 Frontispiece of Guiseppe Maria Mitelli, *L'Alfabeto in sogno* (Bologna, 1683).

author's name are all there. In this triad, the author is probably the most privileged, for he appears three times: in the image, as the dreamer; in explanatory form ('the artist dreaming') and, finally, in the nominal form which takes the place of the signature: 'F.co de Goya'. What we have here is a phenomenon absolutely central to Goya's art: subjective, personal, self-reflective. In the first version (illus. 72) this idea first manifested itself as a split in the person dreaming. In the final version (illus. 98) we are being confronted by a multiple highlighting of the 'person' of the creator: dreamer-author-signatory. In the advertisement that appeared in the 1799 *Diario de Madrid*, the same idea re-surfaced in response to the insistent call of auctorial authority. For Goya, as for so many eighteenth-century creators, the 'auctorial experience' is also (and particularly) the 'experience of me'.³⁰ The rest of the text(s) that appears in the 'first dream' requires particular attention because of the two syntagms that are to be found there: 'work of caprices' (*obras de caprichos*) and 'Universal Language' (*Ydioma universal*). This last syntagm is inserted, not into the actual paratextual space, but into the image itself. It has been repeatedly subjected to in-depth analyses³¹ that generally favour the ancient myth of the 'universal language', as resuscitated and revived by eighteenth-century grammarians and philosophers (illus. 99).³² It was also at around this time that cultured Spaniards became aware of the myth, by way of experiences such as hypnosis, mesmeric telepathy, teaching and entertainment.³³ These were probably the same people who attended demonstrations of magic lanterns and fantascopes. An article from the 1799 *Diario de Madrid* reveals that among the participants were the Duke and Duchess of Osuna, who were members of the most progressive intelligentsia in Madrid.³⁴ Because there are so few visual records of these events, it is difficult to draw any conclusion as to their exact role in the evolution of Goya's figurative language. We can, however, presume that they did have a role. The *Diario* reveals that these experiments were meant to demonstrate the pre-eminence of images in inter-human communication and it is easy to imagine just how appealing this concept would have proved to the artist: 'This mute and purely ocular language can easily be converted into a spoken language destined to the hearing since it presents the true prototype of a universal language.'³⁵ We now need to examine briefly the syntagm

obras de capricho that is part of the inscription and that anticipates the change that was to come two years later, when the title *Sueños* was finally abandoned for good. It could be called a *para-* or *pre-*title.

In 1799 when the series of 72 etchings was expanded to 80, and the new title of *Los Caprichos*³⁶ began to replace the old title of *Sueños*, what is being seen is not just a change of title but also (and above all) a variation in the system of entitling books. The fact can never be over-stressed that the title, *Los Caprichos*, appears neither on the endpage of the series nor anywhere else. The 1797 premonitory inscription refers to *obra caprichosa*, the advertisement in the 1799 *Diario de Madrid* to a 'collection of Prints and Capricious subjects' (*colección de estampas de asuntos caprichosos*) and one of the earliest critics, as we have already seen, uses the expression 'a book of witches and satyrs'. The first documentary evidence to come from the artist himself, the receipt for the four series purchased by the Osuna family, uses a more precise expression but one that is not without ambiguity: 'cuatro libros de caprichos y grabados'.³⁷

The frontispiece to the series, in its definitive format, contains neither title, nor date, but only the portrait of Goya with his signature-name (illus. 100). This was not totally unusual, as his English colleagues had already produced similar authorial frontispieces.³⁸ Several details are worth emphasizing. For example, Goya has abandoned all allegorizing allusions in order to demonstrate his modernity and the topicality of his vision. The French-style clothes, especially the top hat, present him as a liberal if not as a 'free' intellectual (illus. 7).³⁹ Some time later, this costume was to become the symbol of those who used the reversing of the world as an anti-world (illus. 3, 103). But one particularly important aspect is that the self-portrait is numbered and that it is therefore the *first capricho* of the series of 80.

This first 'caprice', then, is not a narrative scene (unlike the next one) but an unusual self-portrait, since it is in profile. It is not difficult to ascertain why this kind of self-portrait is so rare: no-one can see and reproduce their own profile without the help of a whole complicated system of objectivation. Once he had abandoned the idea of an allegorical frontispiece (*el autor soñando*; illus. 72, 73), Goya even toyed with the idea of a full-frontal self-portrait,⁴⁰ an idea that he soon abandoned. By por-

100 Goya,
'Franciso Goya y
Lucientes, Painter',
frontispiece of the
Caprichos, 1797–8,
etching and
aquatint.



traying himself in profile, he was opting for a solution that was not completely unfamiliar to him since he had tackled it before in the integrated self-portraits produced in the 1780s (illus. 141, 142). By returning to it at this point, he was drawing attention to certain details, the first being the self-objectivation. The symbolic shape of the profile (unlike the frontal image) is 'in the form of the third person'. It always represents a 'he', a 'him'. It corresponds in effect to Goya's repeated efforts to



101 Francisco de Paula Marti Mora, *Disprecio* (Contempt), engraving from Fermin Eduardo Zeglirscosac, *Ensayo sobre el origen y naturaleza de las pasiones* (Madrid, 1800).

102 Marti Mora, *Tristeza* (Sadness), engraving from Zeglirscosac, *Ensayo sobre el origen y naturaleza de las pasiones*.

103 Catalan, 'The World Upside Down', early 19th century, print.

name himself in a neutral fashion (*el autor, el pintor*, etc.). It also involves the idea of the 'person' becoming the 'object of observation'. In other words, whereas frontality establishes a *me/you* dialogue, the contemplation of the profile will always be the contemplation of 'the other'.⁴¹ But Goya's trick will no doubt have been spotted: he avoids a full profile by twisting the head slightly. The result is no doubt significant: he is the person who is allowing himself to be both observed and observer, both object and subject of the representation. Instead of the 'dreaming author' of the first frontispiece (illus. 72), we have an 'observed/observing author'. Something of the early split of the thematized gaze remains, but in a different form. The artist's left eye, half-covered by the heavy eyelid, and the oblique gaze with which he looks at the world are probably the key to the whole series.

Eleanor Sayre has drawn attention to the possibility that Goya might have been inspired by the print and description associated with 'Contempt' from Charles Le Brun's treatise on 'expressions of passion'.⁴² This is an interesting hypothesis but needs to be modified. It seems likely that Goya's direct source was not Le Brun but rather his Spanish interpreter Fermin Eduardo Zeglirscosac, who in 1800 published an illustrated *Essay on the Origin and Nature of the Passions*.⁴³ If Goya was familiar with this essay shortly before its publication, as we assume he was, he chose not to copy a single one of its expressions but instead to produce an interesting and quite remarkable pair of illustrations representing Contempt (*Disprecio*) and Sadness (*Tristeza*) (illus. 101, 102). The profile view he used for Contempt is not only that of one of the figures that appeared in Zeglirscosac's essay but also corresponds to the particular attention paid to the shape of the profile as an 'objective' form of the person. It was Lavater in particular who saw the profile as the perfect method by which to analyze personalities (see Chapter 7). It should come as no surprise, therefore, to find that the earliest commentary on the self-portrait-frontispiece of the *Caprichos* uncovered *this* very unequivocal aspect, interpreting the first page of the *Caprichos* as a self-portrait *and* at the same time as a physiognomical essay. Let us consider the three main manuscript explanations:

Ayala Manuscript: True portrait of oneself, in satirical attitude (*Verdadero retrato suyo, de gesto satirico*).

Stirling Manuscript: True portrait of oneself, in malicious attitude (*Verdadero retrato suyo, de gesto maligno*).

Manuscript from the National Library of Madrid: True portrait of oneself, in a bad humour and in a satirical attitude (*Verdadero retrato suyo, de mal humor, y gesto satirico*).

All the commentators have used the same syntagm to express the notion of self-portrait (*Verdadero retrato suyo*/true portrait of oneself), but differ when it comes to defining the physiognomy (*el gesto*). This was referred to as 'satirical' the first time, as 'malicious' the second and as 'satirical and in a bad humour' the third. This last description places the definition of the self-portrait (and therefore the account of the whole vision governing the *Caprichos*) on a complex symbolic level.

El mal humor, the 'bad humour', to which the explanatory manuscript from the National Library of Madrid refers, is a notion that comes from the medico-philosophical tradition. *El mal humor*, before being a 'state' or a 'emotion of the soul', originally referred to a 'character' or more precisely to a 'temperament'. It was the new name given to the ancient *black bile* (the *atrabile*, *la mélainè cholè*), or more precisely, to its harmful variant since an 'excessive' or 'corrupt humour' could, in extreme cases, lead either to genius or madness.⁴⁴ Black bile, or more precisely the 'bad humour' referred to by physiognomists, is a concentrated substance that is acrid, irritating and bitter. The most complete phenomenology we have, is the one left us by Galen:

. . . it resembles the most mordant vinegar . . . It causes ulcers by eating away all the areas of the body it comes into contact with if it is not diluted. Vinegar, because it is deceiving, escapes easily, whereas the density of the black bile, by procuring itself a stable location, is the cause of the corrosion.⁴⁵

In Spain the most revealing description can be found in Huarte de San Juan's huge tome, *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias* (1594), a great classic in the literature on melancholy:

It is necessary to know that among doctors and philosophers there is a great discussion around the nature and qualities of vinegar, dry bile and ash. (. . .) We are therefore able to verify that vinegar and dry melancholy open up and make earth ferment because of the heat and do not close it

up, even when the majority of these humours is cold. It follows therefore that dry melancholics marry great intelligence with much imagination.⁴⁶

We find ourselves once again confronted with a description of a corrosive liquid substance, which reacts as a result of a shift from substantial register to metaphoric register. As scholars have demonstrated,⁴⁷ in the seventeenth but more especially in the eighteenth century, the Latin word *humor* resurfaced in English as *humour* and spread to almost all European languages. It was sometimes defined as 'the ability to depict things that cause gaiety and laughter, whilst pretending to be solemn and serious'.⁴⁸ *Humour* very soon became associated with *wit* and was accepted as a syntagm, as for example in Shaftesbury's *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour* (1709). In this text, the author makes a clear distinction between 'humour' and 'humours', the 'humours' being by antonomasia 'bad humours'.⁴⁹

The expression used in the explanatory manuscript from the National Library of Madrid – 'true portrait of oneself, in a bad humour and in a satirical attitude' – belongs to the tradition that combines *humour* with *wit* ('mal humor' with 'gesto satirico'). The only difference is that, by qualifying 'humour' and stressing that it is a 'bad humour', the traditional atrabilious origins of the term are recalled. All the ancient philosophers, from Galen on, have underlined its pathological as well as prophylactic nature. An excess of humour, dangerous since it could cause madness, was treated in one of two ways: either by 'drying' or 'purging' the humours.⁵⁰ A seventeenth-century engraving (illus. 104) illustrates both these methods, but in a comic way which demonstrates how people distanced themselves from the medicine of the ancient 'humorists'. The engraving shows the inside of an *apotheca*, where people came to be cured, as the inscription indicates, of fantasy or purged of madness. On the right, the apothecary is introducing the head of a patient into a hot oven which, by 'drying the humours', releases into the atmosphere the fantasies they had created. In the background of the shop the purgative substances are lined up on shelves and labelled 'Virtue', 'Reason', 'Good Spirit', etc. The doctor on the left is forcing a sick man to swallow a good dose of 'Wisdom', which instantly makes him expel, through a hole in the chair, three lumps of waste



104 German, *The Doctor Curing Fantasy, also Purging Madness with the Use of Drugs*, c. 1630, copper engraving.

material in the form of lunatics.⁵¹ Goya mocks this kind of practice on more than one occasion. In the *Caprichos*, for example, he tackles the theme of enforced purgation within a satirical context aimed at the clergy and doctors. *Capricho* 58 (illus. 105) shows a monk armed with a giant syringe with which he intends to purge a crowd of sinners who do not appear to be too pleased at the prospect. The *mise-en-scène* is carnivalesque and works through reversal, since it is 'bad humour' that is struggling against 'good humour'. The print is reminiscent of the ancient processions of 'madmen' at whom people used to squirt mud through giant syringes.⁵² In the carnivalesque world, purification and foulness were dialectically connected.⁵³

Capricho 33 (illus. 92, 93) attacked false apothecaries who used false purges. There are no direct allusions to ancient humoral medicine, but the context is that of a fairground where the charlatan had an established place.⁵⁴

A third reference is found not in an image, but in an undated letter written by Goya to his soul-mate Martin Zapater, which experts usually place around the end of 1792,



105 Goya, *Capricho*
58: *Swallow That,*
You Dog, 1797–8,
etching and
aquatint.

that is to say at the time of the onset of the illness that was to have a profound effect on him:

I cannot live like that, with these problems always on my mind, it puts me in a bad humour until I put my hand below my navel – you laugh but do the same, do the same and you will see the beneficial effect this has and you really do need to for the time for bad thoughts bad words and bad deeds has come and my thanks to my Aunt Lorenza who taught me this thing.

To be frank, at first all that made me absent-minded, but

now I fear neither witches, nor spirits, nor ghosts, nor swaggering giants, nor cowards nor brigands nor any kind of body, I fear nothing and no one save humans . . .⁵⁵

This letter, one of the most famous Goya ever wrote, is difficult to understand because of all its twists and turns, especially as the style is so personal – and probably at times in code (for information on Goya's codes, see Chapter 6). Some commentators have detected allusions to masturbation, while others have seen allusions to the imagery of the future *Caprichos*. There is another possible interpretation. It seems possible that Goya is complaining to his friend of his 'bad humour' and of its effects (*brujas, duendes, fantasmas*, etc.). He describes, in a mocking tone, his own cynical method of purgation. The problem is fairly obvious: bad humour (*el mal humor*) is eliminated through bad thoughts, bad words, bad deeds (*malos pensamientos, palabras, obras*).

The year is probably 1792. The following year, having recovered from his terrible illness, Goya began the long period of reflection that would lead to the creation of the drawings and plates populated with the spirits and humans that had so terrified him during the crises of 'bad humour' described to his friend. It would appear that Goya was fortunate enough to find another, more appropriate way of freeing himself from his 'black bile'.

1, DISENCHANTMENT STREET, MOONLESS NIGHT
(‘STRONG WATERS’ – THIRD CONJECTURE)

Goya probably bought the house in the calle del Desengaño in 1779⁵⁶ and it seems likely that he found the name of this old Madrid street appealing.⁵⁷ When, a few years later, in 1799, he decided to sell the *Caprichos* himself through the drug-store on the ground floor of the house, by specifying in the *Diario de Madrid* announcement that the sale would be held at calle del Desengaño no. 1 (1, Disenchantment Street), he was creating a poetic space in the heart of reality. It was not to be the last time he would undertake such a venture. He did so again, at least once more, when, alone and ill, he left Madrid and bought himself a house on the outskirts of the city. This house bore the beautiful name of *Quinta del Sordo*/the House of the Deaf Man. There is little doubt but that this name (and house itself)

met the old painter's requirements. The way he gave symbolic shape to this space with paintings inspired by his fantasies is too well known to be investigated here.

Just as the *décor* of the *Quinta del Sordo* is unavoidably linked to its name, so the sale of the *Caprichos* in the calle del Desengaño no. 1 cannot be unrelated to the cultural and symbolic content of this toponymic. Goya's participation in the game may have been inspired by the playful experiments that were very much in vogue in the literary and intellectual circles he frequented. José Cadalso, for instance, in his *Cartas Marruecas* (1789), by tackling the figure of the charlatan-apothecary, provides an example of the burlesque publicity that surrounded miracle products: '... we have not seen products so honourable to the human spirit, so useful to society and so marvellous in their effects as the extraordinary salts invented by Mr Frivoletti in the rue saint Honoré in Paris.'⁵⁸ There is a remnant of this kind of self-reflective publicity in the advertisement that appeared in the *Diario de Madrid*. *Mutatis mutandis*, we could say that the 'caprices' on sale at the 'pharmacy' in Disenchantment Street were to Goya what the 'miracle' salts on offer in the rue saint Honoré were to Mr Frivoletti. With Goya, however, the irony (evident in Cadalso) turned to seriousness.

In order to ascertain just how wide-ranging this new form of play was, the semantic realm of the word *Desengaño* should be examined.⁵⁹ The word is virtually untranslatable today, due to its complexity. It is the opposite of the word *engaño* (error, illusion, charm, deception, hoax, trickery, pretence) and covers a vast territory that ranges from 'discovery' (as in 'discover a deception'), 'disillusion' or 'disenchantment' to nuances such as 'disappointment' and 'sadness'. The eighteenth-century Spanish dictionary gave the word three principal meanings, all related:

<Desengaño. s. m.

Luz de la verdad, conocimiento del error con que se sale del engaño. Lat. *Erroris cognitio*.

[The light of truth, the exposing of the error that helps dispel the charm.]

Desengaño. Se llama tambien el objeto que exercita al desengaño. Lat. *Quod erroris cognitionem excitat*.

[It is also the means by which we discover a deception.]

Desengaño. Vale assimismo claridad que se dice a otro, echandole la falta en la cara. Lat. *Proprum libere dicterum*.
[Can also be used to mean a truth we have told another by throwing an error in his face]⁶⁰

It was as part of this relative polysemantism that eighteenth-century moral literature used the word. An eloquent testimony to this is Father Feyjoo's collected essays entitled 'Universal critical theatre or diverse discourses of all kinds to be used for the exposing of common errors' (*Teatro critico universal o discursos varios de todo genero de materias para el desen-gaño comunes errores*, 1725–8). Goya's etchings also work in the same way. Thus in the inscription on the frontispiece to the 'Dreams' (illus. 73) the author specifies that their aim is to 'banish (*desterrar*) harmful, vulgar beliefs and to perpetuate in this work of caprices the solid testimony of truth'. The advertisement in the *Diario de Madrid*, on the other hand, speaks of 'the censure of human errors and vices' (*censura de los errores y vicios humanos*).⁶¹ In the self-portrait-frontispiece to the final series (illus. 100) Goya includes additional elements from his own authorial *mise-en-scène*. He places himself, as we have seen, in a dual position: on the one hand, he is a *desengañado* (a disappointed, disenchanted person), 'sad' and 'contemptuous', and, on the other, a *desengañador* (he who disenchants, who discovers a deception).

There is a degree of shrewdness and, at the same time, a degree of violence in the very act of disenchantment. The literary figure of the *Desengañado/Desengañador*, as invented by someone like Quevedo or Gracián, is a dual and duplicitous creation. The *Desengañado/Desengañador* – the disenchanted person who disenchants – knows in this instance that all is lies and illusions. Even the word 'world' (*mundus*), which originally meant 'clean', is a lie. The world, explains Gracián, is dirty and foul: '*mundus imundus*'.⁶² Everything is back to front, and the *Desengañado/Desengañador* is the one who *knows it* and who *reveals it*. He always has one eye open, adds Quevedo, and is therefore capable of seeing the inside of things (*mirar por dentro*),⁶³ seeing through appearances, recognizing deceptions, scanning the world in reverse (*mirar al reves*).⁶⁴ The *Desengañado/Desengañador* is the one who can see, and who reveals that the world is representation, spectacle, appearance and deception. Goya gets into the skin of this dual person, as

his self-portrait and the structure of the *Caprichos* demonstrate. The product of an examination (free of illusions) of the world, these images, in order to fulfil their destiny, had in their turn to return to the world, not to 'enchant' it but to 'disenchant' it. No. 1, Discovering, Disillusion, Disenchantment and Sadness Street was probably the most appropriate place for this to happen.

Goya probably first began to think about this series after his illness in 1793. In the biographical account written by his son Xavier in 1831, the date given for the completion of the etchings was 'around 1796-7'.⁶⁵ Xavier might have been being a little optimistic, but the drawings for the 'Madrid Sketchbook' do in effect indicate that by 1797 Goya's ideas were already at an advanced stage and Valentin Carderera, in a very important article, refers to an early sale of the smaller series (*The Dreams*) during that same period.⁶⁶ In any case, and the experts are unanimous on this, by 1798 the final version, with its 80 plates, was finished. Goya took his time creating the series, and was certainly in no hurry to distribute it. By the beginning of 1799, the prints were in circulation (the Osuna family having acquired four copies in January),⁶⁷ but they did not go on public sale until February, due to a delay that we now need to examine.

Above the famous publicity notice, the first page of the *Diario de Madrid* (illus. 89) publishes some significant facts. Below the title of the newspaper, we see the day and the date ('Wednesday, 6th February 1799'). It was common practice to insert, after the date, the saint whose name day it was (Saint Dorothy) and the name of the church where a special mass would be held (the 'Iglesia de San Felipe Neri'). As was the custom in all newspapers at the time (a leftover from the early almanacs),⁶⁸ this was followed by the meteorological information for the day and, in the very last section, details pertaining to the sun and moon. On 6 February 1799 the sun rose at 7.59 and set at 5.01 in the evening. The moon was in its thirtieth day. This last, and apparently banal detail, has until now gone unnoticed. And this is unfortunate. The 'thirtieth day' of the moon, is the day (or night) of the 'new moon'. In classical astrology and later in popular astrology, the expression 'new moon' (*nova luna*) meant that the planet was between two lunar months.⁶⁹ At the end of this period, during which the moon was completely invisible, or, according to ancient

beliefs, 'hidden' so as to be reborn,⁷⁰ a thin crescent appeared in the sky, and this was the *prima luna*, marking the moon's 'renaissance'. According to tradition, when the moon was in its 'thirtieth day' it was in its most dangerous phase, poised at the uncertain boundary between disappearance and appearance. This stage was also referred to as the 'dry moon' (*luna sitiente* or *luna sicca*) because it was thought that the planet, finding itself unable to inhale the humid exaltations it usually fed on, 'was turning its back' on the earth.⁷¹

In the preliminary stages that took Goya from the early studies for the *Dreams* frontispiece (illus. 73) to the final version of his famous *Capricho* 43 (illus. 98), he appears to have modified, or rather reversed his earlier intentions. Having originally focused on the influence of the nocturnal planet on dreams, he preferred, in the end, to reflect on the relationship between the imagination and the state of the 'dry moon' that dominates the world of the *Caprichos*. As well as the 'nocturnalism' in the series, repeatedly and quite rightly underscored by the various interpreters,⁷² the conspicuous absence of moonlight should also be noted. Its significance is even greater since it was so skilfully exploited in other nocturnal pieces.

To all these observations we must add another crucial factor. In the month of February (the month chosen by Goya to put his *Caprichos* on the market) the two, or three 'moonless' days (nights) were different from all the other moonless nights of the year since they coincided with the climax and therefore the end of the Carnival.⁷³ By announcing that the moon, on Wednesday, 6 February, was in its 'thirtieth day', the *Diario de Madrid* was pointing out that this Wednesday was in fact Ash Wednesday. Goya's project – the *Caprichos* – was therefore even more ambitious and of much greater significance than has been recognized until now. It should be considered as the most important *mise-en-scène* of the preface to the dying century.

Goya's decision to publish his great series on Ash Wednesday 1799 is undoubtedly important and is directly related to the ancient rites of passage.⁷⁴ These had already been graphically illustrated in the sixteenth century, as we can see from an engraving after Pieter Bruegel the Elder (illus. 101). This depicts a carnivalized sublunary world, dominated by madness, lust and avarice at the very moment when astronomers, measuring the first crescent of the February



moon, are heralding the end of one time (the Time of Vices) and the beginning of another (the Time of Temperance).

By the end of the eighteenth century, the significance of the Carnival/Lent relationship had changed, and Goya obviously intended to provide it with a more allusive and indirect *mise-en-scène*. Instead of presenting us with a didactic image as Bruegel had done (and as was still being done in the first half of the eighteenth century [illus. 107]), he used the daily press and a publicity notice to introduce his own transgressive imagery into the actual temporality of the last Carnival of the century. A reading of the newspapers published on the days concerned gives the impression that the ancient Carnival/Lent conflict has been remodelled. Signs of this change can be found in the *Diario de Madrid* of Wednesday, 6 February. Apart from the (obligatory) insertion of the moon's phase, there appears to be no reference to the Carnival finishing or to Lent beginning. The only references to a change of temporal order are indirect, although fairly obvious. For example, the paper announces the

106 Philip Galle
after Pieter
Brueghel, *Allegory
of Temperance*,
c. 1600, etching.

107 Frontispiece of
Diego Torres
Villarroel, *Nueva
folla astrologica*
(Madrid, 1761).



NUEVA FOLLA ASTROLOGICA.
PISCATOR
PARA EL AÑO DE 1-61.

beginning of Lent customs, such as the ‘novenas for the souls in purgatory’, or refers to the arrival of a special delivery of cod, or again, mentions the baker, who, worried that he might lose customers during the days of fasting, points out that his products contain no pork fat.⁷⁵

However, the significance of Goya’s choice of Lent as a context continues to intrigue. The most important question is raised by the timing of this choice. In other words, why was the series not on sale to the public during Sunday, Monday and Tuesday of the Carnival (especially since it could have been, given that it was completed in January)? Why wait until the day of the great farewell, that is, until Ash Wednesday? Once again, a comparison with tradition is enlightening.

If there is a symbolic product, which, through its structure and import, anticipates Goya’s *Caprichos*, then it must be *The Ship of Fools* (*Das Narrenschiff*) (illus. 58). Attributed to Sebastian Brant, this famous book was published in Basel in 1494, 1495 and then finally in a revised and enlarged version

in 1499. An account of its reception in Spain at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times has not yet been written.⁷⁶ But this is not what concerns us here.⁷⁷ Instead, let us examine the symbolic import of the publication dates. Scholars have pointed out that all three editions of *The Ship of Fools* were published on Shrove Tuesday and that, in the case of the 1499 edition, it was a special Shrove Tuesday since it was the last of the century, or, more importantly, 1499 preceded the great Jubilee marking the holy year of 1500.⁷⁷ The same scholars have repeatedly stressed how carnivalesque thinking was echoed in the structure of the texts and images of the *Narrenschiff*. In other words, these texts are reminders of the texts and images distributed to the people during the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday prior to Ash Wednesday in anticipation, and as mementoes, of the forthcoming days of abstinence. Carnavalesque madness was seen as temporary, as a necessarily limited time of excess, and Sebastian Brant uses every means available to remind his audience of this. The 1499 edition actually carries a clear warning, directed at those who try to prolong the carnival into the days of abstinence:

I know of many carnival fools
Who continue to wear hats
Even during Holy Lent
One goes around smeared in soot
Another masked and in disguise,
Parades in Shrovetide
His intentions most lewd. (. . .)
Only fools could have invented
Celebrations in Lent
When thoughts should be on Salvation.
A right black night <zu Recht Fast-Nacht>!
And in the streets they constantly run
Filthy and mad.⁷⁸

If, on Shrove Tuesday 1499, Sebastian Brant anathematized those who dared prolong the Carnival, on Ash Wednesday 1799, at the end of the eighteenth century, Goya was to produce the greatest shock in the history of the ancient closing ceremony. His action – selling the imagery of licence on the first day of Lent – can best be understood in the light of carnivalesque ludism rather than Lenten gloom. The whole *mise-en-scène* of the distribution of the *Caprichos* can be interpreted

as an enormous farce that prolongs the Festival beyond its boundaries. There is a possibility that selling 'strong waters' from a pharmacy on the first day of Lent might have had moralizing and 'purgative' ramifications. Whilst emphasizing the quality of the strong waters and their ability to 'censure human errors and vices', the advertisement does not say whether they were designed as a remedy or a poison. Remedy or poison (or perhaps more precisely remedy *and* poison), Goya's strong waters, on sale at a symbolic price (320 *reales* was equivalent to one ounce of gold) are the product of a double carnivalization of the time to repent, since in this act, as in the particular prints that deal with this theme (illus. 85, 86, 100), purification and foulness stand side by side.

In conclusion, on Ash Wednesday 1799 (the day of the funeral of the last Carnival of the Century), Goya, a painter in a bad humour (*desengañado/desengañador*), launched, from the drug-store in Disenchantment Street, for the price of one ounce of gold, strong waters that embodied the transgressive and licentious imagination. In so doing he was performing an actual inversion in the calendar. His symbolic gesture, instead of restricting his imagination to those days specially reserved for madness and licence, projected it into time. Rather than surrounding it, he liberated it; instead of circumscribing it, he released it. By putting his *Caprichos* on the market at the very moment that the last Carnival of the century breathed its last, he was establishing another: this time one that was imaginary, unlimited and perpetual. In the black night of the dying carnival, waves of images (strong waters) established the permanence of a new Carnival. The modern world was born.

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